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ABSTRACT

The "culturally disadvantaged" are men and women over 16, regardless of race, who live outside the mainstream of American life in urban ghettos and isolated rural areas. They are functionally illiterate people. The time for crash programs to employ these people has passed; the total involvement approach is necessary. These employment guidelines are a distillation of knowledge gained from research and from the experiences of private industry and the U.S. Government in its demonstration programs. The 12 guidelines presented are concerned with: (1) preparation of the business or organization for the employment of the culturally disadvantaged, (2) the hiring process itself, and (3) the problems of placement, training, and promotion or mobility. In conclusion, some observations are made concerning the possible gains in the total personnel operation as a result of implementing some of the guidelines. (CH)

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Guidelines for the Employment of the Culturally Disadvantaged

Sidney A. Fine

THE W. E. UPJOHN INSTITUTE FOR EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH
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STAFF PAPER

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GUIDELINES FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

By

SIDNEY A. FINE

June 1969

The W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research
300 South Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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In 1959 the U.S. Department of Labor awarded Dr. Fine its Certificate of Merit. In the same year he received the American Personnel and Guidance Association's award for outstanding research. He is listed in *American Men of Science.*

Recent publications of Dr. Fine are concerned with the measurement of the impact of automation on skill, the design of new careers, the nature and potential of the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles,* and the nature of human performance.

Preface

Many of the ideas in this brochure were originally presented in a public lecture given by the author at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, on March 12, 1968, under the auspices of the Manpower Lecture Series 1967-68, sponsored by the Manpower Research and Training Center of the University.

The author wishes to express his appreciation to Mrs. Rita Joan Thomasberg for her data-gathering and editorial assistance in preparing this paper.

The views of the author are not necessarily those of the W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

Sidney A. Fine

Washington, D.C.
May 1969

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Guidelines for the Employment of the Culturally Disadvantaged

General Considerations

In 1968, following several years of frustration and failure, some small degree of success began to be experienced in the employment of the culturally disadvantaged. In this brochure an attempt is made to discuss some of the reasons for the previous lack of success and to bring together the know-how derived from the experience of industry and government that appears to have a potential for turning the tide and contributing to more fruitful efforts in the future.

To begin with, the term "culturally disadvantaged" should be placed in proper perspective. Like many labels, "culturally disadvantaged" is not entirely satisfactory because of its denigrating nature, but it is more accurate than such terms as "unskilled," "hard-core unemployed," or "poor people." We have, in fact, a two-sided problem, but it can be overcome by increased understanding obtained through education and training. After all, any person who lacks information or experience required for a specific job may be considered culturally disadvantaged. Employers are also disadvantaged if irrelevant cultural barriers in their personnel systems prevent them from hiring the workers they need.[1] The Peace Corps views its corpsmen as culturally disadvantaged in the countries to which they are sent until they are retrained in the language, technology, and customs of that country. The Peace Corps has found that the effectiveness of the corpsmen is vastly increased by providing them with three months of intensive training at a cost of about $2,500 per trainee, either in the host country or in the United States with instructors from the host country. The cost of training a Peace Corpsman can be compared to the $3,500 cost of training a culturally disadvantaged person in the National Alliance of Businessmen JOBS program.

The "culturally disadvantaged" people referred to in this paper are men and women over the age of 16 who live outside the mainstream of American life in urban ghettos and in isolated rural areas. This group includes both minority group members (Negroes, Mexican-Americans, Indians, etc.) and many whites. They are functionally illiterate people. Their reading ability is rarely above sixth-grade level; if they are hired as workers, they must frequently be provided with basic education by industry. They are people who have not experienced our mainstream culture in terms of buying and maintaining decent housing, eating balanced meals, wearing good clothes, indulging in recreational

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[1]Frank H. Cassell, "The Disadvantaged Employer," *Personnel Administration,* November-December 1968, pp. 24-29.

pursuits such as playing golf or attending the theater, or taking vacations — all goodies that we identify with affluence and well-being in the United States. Instead of being consumers of the American cornucopia, they have been consumers — recently militant consumers — of welfare services. They are people whose family stability is assailed and undermined because the opportunities available to most of white society are not available to them. These people make up several million adults in the United States and are concentrated in the central cities.[2] In the past decade their numbers in urban areas have swelled, especially in the case of Negroes, because of migration from rural areas to the cities. The magnitude of this problem has been especially underscored by the recent *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders.*[3]

Guidelines for the employment of the culturally disadvantaged emerged from the following general observations.

First of all, the time for gimmicks, for stop-gap and crash programs, has run out. Such programs as summer hiring of youngsters will not solve the problem and will not quell unrest; the research data are quite clear on this point. For example, a program formerly in great favor, consisting of training people how to be workers or of orienting them to work, will not by itself prepare the culturally disadvantaged to become workers.[4]

Second, a total approach is needed — an approach incorporating a broad understanding of the problem and the total involvement of every segment of a business or institution. The problem faced today is the problem of workers on every level in management, in the union, and in the rank and file. Each group has a role to play; each in one way or another must be brought into the action if the problem is to be dealt with constructively.

Third, the good intentions and the charitable attitudes that have prevailed in the past are not going to be enough. Definite plans should be made to provide jobs for the culturally disadvantaged. A very deliberate, intensified effort is needed — the same kind of effort that ordinarily would go into reducing a budget if a person suddenly found himself overextended and needed to restore his financial balance. Having good intentions not to spend more or not to charge more would not do it. Setting definite realistic spending limits and giving up certain cherished niceties are the deliberate actions that would be required. Likewise, to employ the culturally disadvantaged, deliberate action must be taken

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[2]Harold L. Sheppard, *The Nature of the Job Problem and the Role of New Public Service Employment* (Kalamazoo: The Institute, January 1969), 30 pp.

[3]*Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., March 1968).

[4]David Wellman, "The Wrong Way to Find Jobs for Negroes," *Transaction,* April 1968.

— action such as the reexamination of personnel policies concerned with selection, hiring, placement, and promotion. Some treasured but not necessarily useful stereotypes may be surrendered in the process.

Here is an example of inability to accept and cope with the realities of the situation. One of the largest companies in the United States recently consulted the writer on the problem of employing the culturally disadvantaged. The personnel director informed me that his company had decided to do something in Newark, New Jersey, where so much trouble occurred in the summer of 1967. I asked him what his company planned to do. He said that his company had decided to hire culturally disadvantaged high school graduates, and he asked for some sort of test to screen the applicants. I told him that I didn't think his requirements were realistic and that I doubted if his company understood the problem. "Oh, we don't?" he retorted with consternation. "Well, you should see these kids who come into our office in Newark. We can't even understand what they are saying. When we tell them about the jobs we're offering them, they say, 'Man, that sounds like hard work. We don't want that kind of work. We want easy jobs.' " I suggested that dependence on credentials such as high school diplomas, test results, and a certain educated manner of talk was simply not the way to attack the problem. Instead, I proposed the guidelines that follow, for which he obviously was not ready. The best I could do for him was to extend my sympathies, because he couldn't accept the realities of the situation and deal with them for what they were. (In recent months, the methods of this company have moved more in the direction suggested by the guidelines.)

Fourth, discussion of the employment of the culturally disadvantaged sometimes gets bogged down because of the belief of some people that the middle class is trying to impose its values on another culture — be it the Mexican-American, Indian, Negro, or even the Appalachian culture. There seems to be little merit in this attitude. The pertinent survey research indicates that the culturally disadvantaged would like to have the material possessions that affluent Americans have — and why not? Certainly minority groups are entitled to the fruits of technology just as much as anyone else. Thus, the concern represented by the foregoing contention appears to be specious and a rationalization for doing nothing.

The values involved in becoming adjusted to work, and which are involved in the problems experienced by the culturally disadvantaged, have to do largely with the needs and the demands of technology, not with middle-class values. Most middle-class people, whether they realize it or not, have made their peace with technology. They are willing to get up every morning early enough to get to work on time five days a week, to dress appropriately, and to do whatever else is necessary to establish a reputation for dependability. "Middle-class" behavior is very often simply the result of concessions that people make to the

production system. These concessions include dressing and behaving in a uniform way and being, in some respects, as regular as a machine. A worker is thus expected to be quite predictable; if he suddenly deviates from the accepted norm for no apparent reason, he is likely to receive a dressing down.

Before the guidelines are presented, it is worth while to note that they are a distillation of the knowledge gained from research, from the experience of private industry, and from the experience of the United States government in administering about $30 million worth of experimental and demonstration programs.

Here is a sample of a research finding. About four or five years ago, it was thought that all we had to do was give the culturally disadvantaged some vocational training in plumbing, welding, food service, or some other trade. And so we went on quite a binge using this approach in the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) program and various other programs. Now we are a lot wiser. Evaluation of those programs that provide primarily vocational training indicates that few such programs have worked for the majority of the culturally disadvantaged. As I look at the findings, I think that the reason was not poor vocational training but rather the single-shot approach of those programs. Today we can see that anything less than a total approach won't work in the majority of cases.

Here is an example from experience. One is constantly confronted by the argument that the culturally disadvantaged just don't want to work. Yet people who take this position will have to account for the following, which is but one of many similar occurrences reported to the press and at private meetings.

Dan Kimball, former Secretary of the Navy and now an executive with Aerojet General Corporation, in a six-month period had more than 5,000 applicants walk in off the streets and sign up for jobs on a project in the Watts area of Los Angeles. Kimball stated, "Our work force there is now in excess of 500, double what we hoped for at the outset. Most of them were hard-core jobless, supposedly with no ability or desire to work, but we found that what they needed was encouragement and an opportunity."[5]

Another illuminating experience was that of the Washington, D.C., Board of Trade Jobs Center where 23 young people were trained for the food service industry as cook's helpers, baker's helpers, salad girls, and pastry chefs. All 23 were placed on jobs by the Center, yet only six were on the job two months later. Why? "Bad hours, low pay, and transportation difficulties [including double bus fares in some cases] are the major reasons why graduates leave their jobs." The average wage of the culinary graduates was $1.65 an hour, hardly enough to pay expenses and make a living. When the employers were in-

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[5] *The New York Times*, December 3, 1967.

formed that a minimum of $2.00 an hour was necessary to hold the workers, they "hit the ceiling." Many of the graduates have since found better jobs on their own initiative, outside the fields in which they were trained by the Center.[6]

The above are but two of dozens of examples which disprove the allegation that the culturally disadvantaged do not want to work.

We come now to the guidelines themselves, which are organized as follows. The first several guidelines are concerned with preparing your business or organization for the employment of the culturally disadvantaged. These are followed by some guidelines concerned with the hiring process itself. The concluding guidelines deal with the problems of placement, training, and promotion or mobility. In conclusion, some observations are made concerning the gains you might realize in your total personnel operation as a result of implementing some of the guidelines.

Preparing Your Organization for the Employment of the Culturally Disadvantaged

Guideline 1. Make a Total Commitment.

The first step is committing your organization to deal constructively with the problem of employing the culturally disadvantaged rather than merely to comply with contractual or legislative regulations. This is fundamental. Commitment is not the tokenism represented by hiring a few blacks (creaming them off the top of the available labor supply) and putting them in front offices to show compliance with applicable regulations. Commitment requires the decision to employ significant numbers of the culturally disadvantaged and to adjust employment policies to make this possible.

What you are likely to find when you take a hard look at your personnel policies is that they have produced the kind of situation once made famous by a *New Yorker* cartoon which showed the director of personnel welcoming into the company a new employee who could have been his twin brother. In other words, what goes on as a result of existing personnel policies is organizational inbreeding — continually bringing into the organization "our kind of guy." This of course leads to conformity and conventionality. Yet, at the same time that a company is practicing this inbreeding, it is probably demanding creativity and imagination, regardless of the fact that its very operating policies tend to undermine these qualities.

In order to hire the culturally disadvantaged, you may have to give up the requirement for high school graduation and most of your written tests — you

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[6]*The Washington Post,* October 20, 1968.

may even have to give up testing entirely. You may also have to give up expecting customary levels of performance at first, and allow more time for workers to achieve the required standards for quantity and quality. You are going to have to be patient and be willing to adjust any attitudes that you may have such as, "They don't want to work," or "Well, my grandfather came here an immigrant and he worked his way up and why can't they do the same thing?"

You must learn to accept the fact that the culturally disadvantaged have been consistently pushed further and further away from the mainstream of American society and that very special and costly efforts must now be made to bring them back. That's why it costs about $8,000 per year to send a culturally disadvantaged person to the Job Corps as compared to $4,000 or $5,000 to send somebody to Harvard for the same period of time. In noting the cost of sending someone to Harvard, we ignore completely the social cost of 18 years' cultural preparation of that young person so that he may have a good chance of succeeding in his studies at Harvard.

Thus, commitment means that the first thing to be done is to adjust company behavior, thinking, and expectations to the reality of the situation, which in turn means making various kinds of allowances. We cannot continue to stand by and demand that the culturally disadvantaged must change, knuckle down, and accept the realities of the world of work while we remain adamant in our prejudices and stereotyped thinking. Without commitment it will be difficult if not impossible to make these adjustments and to tolerate some of the problems that are bound to arise as a result of employing the culturally disadvantaged.

* * * * *

Joseph L. Hudson, Jr., in remarks before the **NRMA** Board of Directors, said:

> If we cannot sensitize our private and public servants to adjust to the new realities of our society, rather than allow historic modus operandi to control decisions, then we have not learned the bitter lessons of Detroit, Newark, and Watts. — *NRMA Executive Report,* Volume 3, Number 1 (January 1968).

Control Data will build a computer parts factory that will train unskilled persons for employment in the slum area of Minneapolis. — *The Minneapolis Star,* November 27, 1967.

A **Michigan utility company** "adopted" a ghetto area school, providing vocational training and part-time work for many pupils. — *The Washington Post,* January 11, 1968.

Lockheed Aircraft experiments with programs hiring only dropouts who have been unemployed for a year. Applicants must have unstable work records, 75% must be members of minorities, and 25% HAD to have police records. — *Los Angeles Times,* August 18, 1968.

Ford Motor sets up employment offices in Detroit slums.—*Los Angeles Times,* August 18, 1968.

Inland Steel finds jobs for 3,000 persons by using a young Negro personnel officer as host on a weekly television show called "Opportunity Line." — *Los Angeles Times,* August 18, 1968.

Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Co. sends out six Negro recruiters to search bars, poolrooms, and barbershops. — *Los Angeles Times,* August 18, 1968.

Equitable Life Assurance Society of America scales down employment standards so that they exclude only "youths with IQ's below 90, narcotic addicts, and perverts." — *Los Angeles Times,* August 18, 1968.

The board of the **National Retail Merchants Association** adopted a 14-point guide for the employment of the underprivileged, including reexamination of minimum employment and testing standards. — *The New York Times,* January 11, 1968.

Testifying before an Equal Opportunity Employment Commission hearing studying discrimination against Negro and Puerto Rican white-collar workers in New York, Andrew Heiskell, chairman of the board of *Time, Inc.,* outlined several points of *Time*'s program for hiring and employing minority white-collar workers, among them:

> First, to seek talent more actively from the minority groups through as many avenues as possible; second, to develop additional contacts with the minority group community to assure that Time, Inc., has an open-door practice as well as policy; and third, to assist in increasing the availability of minority group talent. — *The New York Times,* January 18, 1968.

Neiman-Marcus of Dallas told its suppliers that it will favor those who act to employ and train members of minority groups. In his letter to more than 2,000 suppliers, Mr. Marcus said:

> The Federal Government, as you know, requires that every one of its suppliers of goods and services certifies that it is an equal opportunity employer. We believe a private company should do no less and we maintain an equal opportunity policy in our employment program. — *The New York Times,* January 10, 1968.

David Rockefeller, president of the **Chase Manhattan Bank,** in testifying before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission hearing investigating discrimination in the hiring of white-collar minority workers, in his remarks said:

> [The] individual company or bank must not be overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problem. When you see disadvantaged young men and women who have managed to get high school diplomas with no more than fifth-grade reading ability . . . who have only the vaguest notion of what constitutes punctuality and proper attire . . . who suffer from an almost total lack of motivation . . . when you see these things, it is easy to throw up your hands and conclude that the job is hopeless; easy, I say, but highly unwise — the important thing is to keep trying. — *The New York Times,* January 17, 1968.

Guideline 2. Put the Reins in High-Level Hands.

Some high-level company officer must be given responsibility for implementing the effort. He must be someone on a vice-presidential level — someone whose leverage — whose power — means something. He must be able to deal with protests because the flak that he will get from the lower ranks trying to do their jobs in the old traditional way will be loud and threatening. Someone in a high-level position must be available to deal with this reaction in a constructive and effective way. Someone must be able to develop a program which will involve all staff levels within the company — rank and file, first-line supervision, second-line supervision, etc. — particularly first-line supervision.[7]

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> An associate of Henry Ford says Mr. Ford "spends more time on this than any other thing . . . and let me tell you: It is all headaches." — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 14, 1968.
>
> At **International Business Machines Corp.,** there now is a Director of Equal Opportunity Programs. — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 14, 1968.
>
> Mr. Slater of **Hancock,** when asked how much time he spends on the problem, replied, "I don't want policyholders writing in and asking why they're paying my salary." — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 14, 1968.
>
> **Bendix** employs a full-time equal opportunity coordinator reporting to the vice president of industrial relations. — Senator Robert P. Griffin of Michigan, *Congressional Record,* September 11, 1968.

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[7]Frank C. Porter, "Touchy Problems Peril On-Job Negro Training," *Los Angeles Times,* December 4, 1968.

[Programs to employ the hard-core unemployed must have] *priority commitment* by top company officials, communicated effectively and continuously down the entire chain of command of their companies. — "Putting the Hard-Core Unemployed Into Jobs," *A Report of the Business-Civic Leadership Conference on Employment Problems,* June 5-7, 1967, Chicago, Illinois.

No program to hire the hard-core poor will succeed unless top management is totally committed. "Any company that gets into this kind of project without the backing of the top man will fall flat on its face," says Richard Knapp, personnel manager at **Warner & Swasey,** Cleveland. **Kodak** Chairman William Vaughn says bluntly: "Unless top management lays it on the line, lower-echelon people won't do it. Even then, they may not do it without follow-up." — *Factory,* February 1968.

"You find some resistance among plant employees," admits Walter Maynor, industrial relations director at **Sherwin-Williams.** "But we let them know in no uncertain terms that this policy had been set by our top people and that they intend to enforce it." — *Factory,* February 1968.

Guideline 3. Organize a Training Program for Company Personnel.

A definite training program must be organized to educate company employees, particularly supervisors, union stewards, and employment office interviewers. (See Guideline 11 for reference to a training program available commercially.) This training should not be merely a pep talk or an exhortation. What is necessary here is a true training program. The employees need to know to what extent the company is committed. They need to hear about the culturally disadvantaged from local leaders of the Urban League, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), or the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) — from someone who can give them a real gut-level orientation as to the nature of the problem. They need to hear from someone who can tell it like it is. For example, it was discovered that 25 percent of the culturally disadvantaged surveyed in one study couldn't even tell time; understandably this would contribute to their lack of punctuality.[8] Your present employees need to know facts like these to gain some understanding of the problems to be faced. Perhaps five or six training sessions would be required, and perhaps at some point the company employees could be addressed by a representative of a local community-action group which has been involved in upholding the rights of the disadvantaged — rights to which many of them don't even know they are entitled. Such a speaker could demonstrate the leadership potential that is waiting to be tapped in minority groups.

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[8]Jesse E. Gordon, *Testing, Counseling, and Supportive Services for Disadvantaged Youth* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1967), p. 37.

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A **New York Telephone Co.** official sees a "dire need" to educate employees to understand and accept the newcomers. — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 11, 1968.

Amid this effort, corporate managers have to deal with another delicate problem — white backlash among workers who believe Negroes are getting preferential treatment or not doing their share of the work. "We have to keep the bank running smoothly," says Walter A. Hoadley, senior vice president and chief economist at the **Bank of America.** "We have to prevent the people who aren't singled out (for special attention) from getting their noses out of joint." — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 11, 1968.

A New York City bank official says, "You can't just calm a situation down by putting a notice on a bulletin board or in a house organ." — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 11, 1968.

A spokesman for **Kroger Co.** says supervisors there were told, "You will be rated on this (civil rights work) as well as on production quotas and profit." — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 11, 1968.

There seem to be two antidotes to backlash: Earnest commitment at the top of a company and untiring efforts to propagandize that commitment down through the ranks. At **RCA,** seminars for 500 executives around the nation were organized shortly after the urban riots in the summer of 1964. [The briefing was done by Chairman David Sarnoff and others.] "It was blunt, straight talk from the top management," a high executive recalls. To make sure that the word got out, Mr. Sarnoff's remarks were videotaped and later played back to 10,000 RCA supervisors and lower management personnel. They were given objectives to meet in the civil rights effort. This policy is reiterated in company publications. — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 11, 1968.

Martin Stone, president of Los Angeles' **Monogram Industries,** lost one foreman who wouldn't go along with his program. "You've got to sell the shop supervisors," Stone warns. "If you don't, the job will never get done — and you'll never be able to pinpoint why." — *Factory,* February 1968.

Guideline 4. Pinpoint Entry Jobs for the Culturally Disadvantaged.

At the start of your effort, it is probably unwise to get involved with major job or organizational redesign. It is better initially to consider your simplest entry jobs as openings for the culturally disadvantaged. These jobs should become the focus for (a) more extensive on-the-job training and (b) some simplification and redesign if the jobs involve reading, writing, or arithmetic tasks that are beyond the immediate abilities of the new workers.

Many of the culturally disadvantaged are better able to relate to things or to people than to data, particularly since data have played a limited role in their lives. Jobs primarily involved with things are probably to be preferred for the new entrants because things are more tangible, more impersonal, and thus will be less threatening for them. Jobs primarily involving things also have more clearly inherent in them the possibility of learning a craft. Furthermore, on the lower functional levels they tend to pay better than data or people jobs.

Attempts to design jobs which are just tacked onto an existing framework smell of "make-work." It is quickly apparent that they don't lead anywhere, and thus they are rejected both by the disadvantaged workers and the existing employees. Using existing jobs with slight modifications is least disturbing to currently employed staff and most realistic for the new entrants. Entry jobs should not only be pinpointed; they should also be integrated within the organizational job structure so that they lead somewhere. It should be apparent to the worker when he is hired that after three to six months in his entry job some improvement will occur, even if it is only a wage increment for dependable work and/or some additional discretion in his work where this is possible.

* * * * *

Esso Research and Engineering Company . . . announced this week that it will hire three small groups of job candidates first, then train them so they can qualify under the company's usual standards for new employees. New job classifications have been established for the trainees, to conform with the less rigorous job-entrance requirements. A goal of ten new employees has been set for each of the two groups, and five candidates will be recruited for a third group. — *N. Y. Amsterdam News,* April 13, 1968.

You may also have to restructure some of your jobs to make them easier to master. Some companies have solved the work performance problem by redefining or restructuring jobs to bring them closer to the reach of unskilled people. **Lockheed** compares this to measures used to train wartime workers. **Buxton-Skinner** in St. Louis established a category of "electrician's helper" one step below "electrical maintenance assistant" to provide niches for poorly skilled workers. To implement its nurse training project, the **Kaiser Foundation** in San Francisco created the job of "clinic assistant" to relieve nurses of such routine though important chores as weighing patients and taking temperatures. — *Factory,* February 1968.

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To summarize, the four guidelines useful in preparing for the employment of the culturally disadvantaged are: making a total commitment, assigning re-

sponsibility to high-level hands, organizing a training program for company personnel to orient them to the problems of the culturally disadvantaged, and pinpointing entry jobs in which the culturally disadvantaged will be placed, including possible lines of advancement. Each of these preparations is important. If you omit any one of them, the consequences of your omission will plague your program later in one way or another.

Hiring

Guideline 5. Interview; Don't Test.

With the possible exception of work-sample tests[9] which are akin to on-the-job tryout, no tests are very useful in hiring the culturally disadvantaged. Whether the tests are nonverbal or matrices tests or so-called "culture-free" tests, they are all unfair. Basically tests show how well, in comparison with peers, the testee has absorbed his culture and education. Obviously, testing individuals who have not really participated in the same culture will merely prove what we already know — that *they are culturally disadvantaged as far as technology and employment are concerned.*

After the culturally disadvantaged are hired, there are some situations in which testing can be of help. For example, coaching the culturally disadvantaged on the very tests that they are going to be given to qualify as apprentices or for promotion (such as those given to qualify for a police force) has been helpful. But this can only be done on a small scale in rather special situations. Those individuals with a little more on the ball, especially if they have seen some of their peers get jobs as a result of tests, can be motivated to go through with a test. But a job must be the definite and automatic result of a successful score on a test.[10]

Fundamentally, tests have a negative effect on the disadvantaged — they demotivate. To the hard-core unemployed, they are the antithesis of commitment, and evidence that the establishment is not sincere as far as hiring them is concerned. They walk out. They walk away. To understand what being tested means to these people, we must keep in mind that to take a test requires skills in self-management acquired as a result of successful experiences in childhood and adolescence. Even in middle-class families, some young people are quite nervous about tests. They may be diligent students, but when tested they don't do very well. They are able to pass tests only after considerable cramming and

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[9]"Tests That Sharpen Work Skills," *Business Week,* January 4, 1969, pp. 88-90.

[10]For information about the experience of the Workers Defense League in test coaching, see F. Ray Marshall and Vernon M. Briggs, Jr., *The Negro and Apprenticeship* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), pp. 72-78.

coaching — and often with a little cheating. Tests reveal not only an individual's knowledge but also his adjustment to the testing situation or his cultural adaptation.

The interview, despite its "unreliability," is nevertheless a more human, less cold, and less impersonal means of selection. It enables you to get your message across in regard to the particular demands of, and necessary qualifications for, the job in question. Above all, it is relevant, and it is a vehicle through which meaningful communication can occur.

If you are going to make any probes at all during the course of the interview, simply check on any experience the individual has had in a frank way, asking him, "What work have you done; what experience have you had that shows you will be able to do the job for us? It doesn't have to be work that you were paid for."

The lowest possible qualifications consistent with safety of the new employee and his coworkers should be set for the entry jobs. Specific decisions should be made as to what criminal record and amount of education will be acceptable — and these decisions will necessitate realistic judgment.

If you feel that you would prefer to hire a culturally disadvantaged person only on a probationary basis, the interview is the time to tell him so. He should be told exactly how long the probationary period will be — for example, eight weeks. He should also be made aware that he will be given a certain time to make his adjustments before the usual quality control standards are applied to his work.

In the case of interviews which are conducted at your plant or place of business, it might be possible for you to show the prospective employee the actual place where he will be working. This kind of communication speaks louder than words.

In conclusion: Interview — don't test. Screen in applicants wherever you can rather than be quick to screen them out. This procedure is in line with your commitment to accept people with the lowest qualifications.

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Western Electric dropped its normal standards to hire the hard-core unemployed. No educational requirements were set and no psychological testing was conducted. Health standards were relaxed and criminal records were no bar to employment. — *The New York Times,* April 14, 1968.

[**Ford Motor Company** is putting its own labor recruiters into the inner city of Detroit], waiving traditional written tests of "ability" and hiring men on the spot where they live. In effect, the company is saying that it is

not waiting for men to come looking for jobs, but is taking jobs to the men. Chairman Henry Ford, II, himself set the tone. "If they want jobs, we'll get them jobs," he said. "Equal employment opportunity requires more than the elimination of deliberate racial discrimination. Opportunity is not equal when people who would make good employees are not hired because they do not know of openings, because they lack the self-confidence to apply, or because formal hiring criteria screen out potentially good employees as well as potentially poor ones. . . . Management should be willing to go directly into the city, to seek out the unemployed, to make sure that hiring standards are not unnecessarily or unrealistically restrictive." — *The New York Times Magazine,* January 28, 1968.

After the Watts riots in Los Angeles, some 50 companies sent recruiters directly into the district, and the Management Council induced the California Employment Commission to open a branch there. — *Factory,* February 1968.

In Rochester, N.Y., **Kodak** and other companies hold interviews at Negro neighborhood centers and take job referrals from 17 social agencies. — *Factory,* February 1968.

United Airlines sends Negro pilots, stewardesses, and ticket agents into the ghettos to talk with people. Says Daniel E. Kain, personnel director for field services: "These people have to taste it, feel it, see it. Otherwise it's a bunch of hot air." — *Factory,* February 1968.

Warner & Swasey eliminated the usual hiring yardsticks, including testing. **Pacific Telephone & Telegraph,** along with other companies, has hired people with police records. **Ohio Bell Telephone** went back over its list of rejected applicants just to hire some who had been considered unqualified. — *Factory,* February 1968.

In referring to vacancies in the District of Columbia's Department of Corrections, William Raspberry notes:

> Many of the people who want the work — and whom the Department would like to have — can't pass the written test. Others knowing a written examination is required, don't bother to apply. . . . But increasingly in the case of minority groups, we are discovering that the tests are an inadequate substitute. They tell us more about an applicant's ability to pass tests than his ability to perform on the job. — *The Washington Post,* July 21, 1967.

Placement

Guideline 6. Place the Applicant on the Job for Which He Is Interviewed.

The job in which the worker is placed should accord as closely as possible to the job for which he is interviewed. He is entering a new world; everything

is more or less unfamiliar. He is on guard and is not sure whether this is going to be another nothing situation like many others he has experienced in the past. Therefore any shift in the beginning is likely to arouse his suspicions and make him wonder if he can rely on the company's word.

It is important for you to keep these considerations in mind, particularly when observing the initial attitudes of the new workers which may suggest passivity, a lack of enthusiasm, or a lack of motivation. An evaluation of MDTA experimental and demonstration projects states: "Disadvantaged youth often look and act unmotivated to work *in the absence of opportunities to work and in the absence of the incentives which work entails.* When the opportunities present themselves, the classical diagnosis of 'unmotivated youth' often turns out to be wrong. In short, what appears to be a lack of motivation is more likely to be a withdrawal from potential or expected failure to gratify one's *motives.*"[11] Unfortunately, this describes an all too common situation.

From the start, make clear to the new employee what is expected of him. You must clearly define the basic prescribed and discretionary content of the entry job; that is, what is specified and required and what is up to the judgment of the worker. He should be told, "This is what is expected of you for a few months. You are going to do these specific tasks; you will be a helper [or whatever his position will be]. Later it will be possible for you to work into something that requires the experience you will get on this job, and then you will have your own opportunity to progress and to earn a little more." That's enough for a beginning.

The point is that there must be communicated to the new worker a feeling that his job is not just another nothing (dead-end) job but that he is entering into the mainstream of activity and there is a future to his job. Of course, the wage paid will indicate this, as well as the fringe benefits that go with it.

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Robert J. Scanlon is the general manager of the government education division of **Computing and Software, Inc.** He initiated his company's "instant hiring" program, which was a major forerunner of other industry projects to hire the hard-core unemployed. Regarding his hiring efforts, Mr. Scanlon commented: "And we did our hiring on the spot, making sure the guy knew where and when to report. None of this 'We'll call you.' " — *Los Angeles Times,* August 1, 1968.

At one of **Ford Motor's** employment centers in the ghetto area of Detroit, this exchange took place between recruiter Ned D'Assaro and 42-year-old Richard Salter, a hard-core applicant: "Dick, you've passed your physical, and

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[11]See footnote 8, p. 67.

you have a job. Probably as a core fitter at the Rouge plant. Can you be at Gate 2 tomorrow morning?" "Can I!" was Salter's pleased response. — *The New York Times Magazine,* January 28, 1968.

Training and Support

The next five guidelines are concerned with training and supporting the disadvantaged worker on the job. They involve making conscious efforts to do things for disadvantaged workers which in other ways are already done for advantaged workers and taken for granted by them. The actions recommended can easily be misunderstood as coddling and therefore warrant some prior explanation.

Normally employers expect entry workers whom they employ to be "educated" — that is, to evidence a state of readiness for work which requires only that they be trained in the specific content of their jobs. Selection processes — testing, interviewing, etc. — are designed to screen the qualifications of individuals to determine precisely their state of readiness.

What does this state of readiness consist of and how are the characteristics of readiness usually acquired? One way of determining this is to take a closer look at what effective performance involves. Elsewhere I have suggested that effective performance consists of a blend of three types of skills: *adaptive skills* concerned with management of self in relation to time, space, people, and impulse control, particularly as such management relates to the physical, interpersonal, and organizational conditions of work; *functional skills* concerned with the individual's ability to relate to things, data, and people from simple to complex involvement; and *specific content skills,* which enable an individual to fulfill the requirements and specifications of a particular employer and achieve standards that satisfy the market.[12] That all three types of skills are involved in a balanced way in achieving effective performance becomes evident upon the analysis of various types of ineffective performance.

How are these skills acquired? Normally, adaptive skills that enable one to function in a work situation are acquired in childhood in the environment of family and peers and reinforced in school; functional skills are acquired in play and school experiences and reinforced in various casual work experiences, both in and out of school; specific content skills are typically acquired on the job with training and reinforced by growth in the work situation.

If this analysis is valid (and there is much evidence to suggest that it is), then the problem faced by the culturally disadvantaged worker and the em-

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[12] "Nature of Skill: Implications for Education and Training," *Proceedings, 75th Annual Convention, American Psychological Association,* 1967.

ployer becomes quite clear. The family and school situations have not functioned for the culturally disadvantaged worker as they have for the culturally advantaged person — that is, they have not provided him with the adaptive and functional skills that make it possible for him to enter upon work with normal expectations of success. It is likely that the way of life and the inadequate schools in a ghetto or isolated rural area have caused him to develop maladaptive skills, including an antipathy toward school and work.

Thus the job becomes the first real connection of the culturally disadvantaged worker with the mainstream of society. The employer is confronted with a situation in which, instead of just having to train the worker in specific content skills, he must provide the opportunity for the worker to acquire adaptive and functional skills as well, including such basic skills as reading and simple computation.

This is where commitment and initial preparation are put to the real test. The employer must assume an unfamiliar and basically unwanted role. Furthermore, the job itself becomes a sort of crucible where the worker serves instrumentally to produce a product or service and the organization plays a significant role in shaping the worker.

It is with these considerations in mind that we now turn to the guidelines concerned with training, educating, and supporting the disadvantaged worker in his new-found opportunity.

Guideline 7. Coach To Teach and Reinforce Adaptive Skills.

Initially, the job must be considered as a vehicle through which the worker can identify and achieve adaptive skills relevant to technology. The job gives the culturally disadvantaged person the opportunity to respond as a whole person to the range of stimuli in a job situation, and gives the employer the opportunity to reinforce the adaptations that satisfy technological standards. In short, the job initially becomes a means through which communication takes place. The worker's exposure to the job content and tasks is important in this learning situation, but of equal importance are the interactions of the worker with his peers and supervisors and the reinforcement of adaptive skills relevant to punctuality, safety, impulse control, etc. It is in this context that coaching can be tremendously useful.

Here is my definition of what it means to coach: "Befriend and encourage an individual on a personal caring basis by approximating a peer or family-type relationship, either in a one-to-one or small-group situation. Give instruction, advice, and personal assistance concerning behavior, participation in groups, activities of daily living, and various institutional services."

The coaching technique worked in Pontiac, Michigan. With recruiting help from the Urban League, the Pontiac Motor Division of General Motors Cor-

poration hired 281 "unemployables" in the fall of 1967. "Of the 281 hired, 150 (53%) still were on the job after six months and doing satisfactory work. Thirty-nine had been dismissed and the remaining 92 had left of their own accord. 'This record,' the Division's personnel director states, 'exceeded our expectations.' He adds that Pontiac's overall experience with the retention of regular hires is about the same."[13]

One key factor in the success of the Pontiac program was the fact that a coordinator was appointed by the company to work with the new employees. By keeping close tabs on each of the disadvantaged workers, aided by feedback from foremen and supervisors, he was able to deal with most problems before they got out of hand. Working with this coordinator were Urban League volunteers, who took a strong personal interest in helping the workers to succeed. Speaking of these volunteers, a Pontiac executive said, "These volunteers know the 'unemployables' and the problems they must overcome because they come from similar backgrounds themselves. They feel badly when one of the trainees slips, and they try to make sure he doesn't slip again. They work with him like an A.A. member works with an alcoholic. They keep after him and support him until he is able to make it alone."[14]

The success of Alcoholics Anonymous in rehabilitating "hard-core" drinkers through peer relationships, or coaching techniques, is well known. These techniques can work equally well with the culturally disadvantaged whose problems in adjusting to the demands of a job are deep rooted.

The Neighborhood House in Richmond, California, apparently was the first organization outside industry to use coaching successfully with disadvantaged youth.[15] Coaching is now a major component of the Jobs Now Project in Chicago.[16]

To be culturally disadvantaged is terribly discouraging. The culturally disadvantaged person will make mistake after mistake because that is what he subconsciously expects of himself. He's going to stumble. Who can best help him? It seems natural that it should be someone from his peer group, someone who is on the same social level but making it on the job. Assigning this function to an already employed worker would seem to be an excellent way of involving the rank and file. In some cases, a worker especially suited for this role might be asked to coach more than one person. If it seems desirable, a worker assigned to be a coach could receive a small pay incentive for his additional responsibility.

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[13]Stephen Habbe, "Hiring the Hardcore Unemployed," *The Conference Board Record,* June 1968, p. 20.

[14]*Loc. cit.*

[15]Ida R. Hoos, *Retraining the Work Force — An Analysis of Current Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 142-165.

[16]Jobs Now Project, *Jobs Now Project First Year Report, C—Coaching* (Chicago: 1967).

It is the worker with the coaching assignment who helps the culturally disadvantaged person to tell time and to show up for work in the morning — sometimes by going after him and dragging him out of bed. Maybe he has to be dragged out of bed because that bed was occupied by someone else the first part of the night. Or maybe there was a disturbance going on next door, or maybe any one of a number of different circumstances may have made it difficult for him to get up in the morning, considering the housing conditions under which he probably lives.

The coach may show the new worker how to get around town and may also advise him where to shop or where to get a discount or a bargain. He may discuss the pitfalls of borrowing money at high interest rates or of buying too much on the installment plan. This is coaching, not counseling. It helps to make life tolerable and possible. Coaching provides the kind of information that middle-class individuals exchange in car pools or across backyard fences.

It's important to note also that coaching is not supervising. It is generally unwise for supervisors to try to function as coaches. Supervision is concerned with maintaining job standards, getting the work out on time and in the right quantities, evaluating the worker, and maintaining harmony and smooth working relationships among the workers. The pressures and pushes of supervision are acceptable to the disadvantaged worker and are responded to only if the values reinforced by coaching are common among the workers. Trying to impose supervision on a worker before these values really exist for him is an affront to his dignity and identity. He can't accept it.

Drag someone out of bed in the morning? Yes, that kind of follow-through may be necessary with one who has been out of the mainstream of employment and has developed habits that are maladaptive to ordinary working conditions. It usually takes several weeks to a couple of months for the hard-core individual to get into the swing of things — but he doesn't need coaching forever.

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Robert J. Scanlon of **Computing and Software, Inc.,** said of the trainees hired under his company's "instant hiring" program:

> The conclusions were simple. The trainee needed constant guidance, counseling, income and identity — to feel he belonged, a return to human dignity. And he had to learn to do a job which required some basic education . . . . we had to avoid the normal classroom approach and give each trainee individual attention commensurate to his ability to absorb. — *Los Angeles Times,* August 1, 1968.

Secretary Wirtz reported that seeking out trainees in house-to-house drives and using the "buddy system" — assigning a union member to help each trainee

— "produced spectacular results in our efforts to help those most in need." This was done under an MDTA contract with the **International Union of Electric Workers.** — *AFL-CIO News,* Washington, D.C., January 20, 1968.

Frank McClure, vice president for personnel at **RCA,** says of the hard-core employees, "It's necessary not only to reach out to get them, but also to dip into their personal lives to keep them." In the case of a Negro worker who hadn't been showing up, a personnel man went to his home and found that the worker's brother had been stealing his clothes. Another company found that only a fifth of its new minority workers had alarm clocks; it now tries to persuade them that owning a clock is a necessity. — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 11, 1968.

> In Milwaukee, the **Boston Store** is making a special effort to locate and welcome "hard core" employees. The store is ready to provide clothing and eyeglasses, transportation assistance and counseling by fellow workers. The store is instructing supervisors to help them understand and lead the new employees. — *The New York Times,* July 28, 1968.

Under **General Motors'** Pontiac plan, 219 of the 230 hired in July of 1967 were still at work in November. One clue to this success may lie in the approach which was used:

> Pontiac is a small town where older workers often know the new men, cover up for them when they foul up and go by their homes to find out why they didn't come to work. This sort of peer concern — and pressure — is believed to be the principal reason for the relative success of the Pontiac program.— *The Washington Post,* January 1, 1968.

Henry Ford, II, in a letter to **Ford** supervisory employees requesting their support in the company's efforts to aid minority groups, listed a number of "things we can do," including: Lending "a helping hand in adjusting to the work and to the work place" and treating "all employees with the dignity and understanding every man owes every other." — *The New York Times,* January 18, 1968.

Guideline 8. Distinguish Between Prescribed and Discretionary Job Content.

Every single job involves prescribed and discretionary content, embedded in the job instructions and training. Prescribed content refers to those methods, outputs, etc., of the job which are specified and requested. Even the President of the United States has some prescribed content in his job — that which is written into the Constitution. What is not prescribed is necessarily discretionary; that is, up to the judgment of the individual worker. Unfortunately, this area of discretion is rarely defined, especially in low-level jobs. Yet it is in this

area especially that the job can be a vehicle for adaptation and growth. It is the place where the culturally disadvantaged person can become aware that whatever has not been specified by the technology of the situation leaves him room to express himself as an individual. He must learn to understand that the inner diameter of a bearing being produced must measure 1.500 inches plus or minus .005 inches for the bearing to fit and function properly, and thus that a foreman's insistence upon strict conformity to specifications is not due to his irascibility or middle-class values.

And so I suggest a training approach in which the instruction is technology-centered and the worker is learning the difference between what is prescribed and what is discretionary. It is particularly important that performance standards associated with prescribed specifications not be arbitrarily carried over into areas where personal discretion is the rule. For example, it may be natural for the worker to dance a few steps while doing his job, because of personal exuberance or because the work itself is not particularly exciting. Now that he has the money, he may dress in colors and styles that are quite different from those of the regular work force. These are matters of his personal discretion; and, if this behavior does not interfere with the achievement of technological standards or anyone else's safety or performance, there is no reason to interfere with it. Remote as it may seem, the tolerance of such personal discretion can lead to relevant innovation on the part of the worker.

Guideline 9. Teach Specific Content Skills on the Job; Teach Functional Skills off the Job but in the Job Environment.

As already noted, workers usually acquire their specific content skills on the job. These skills are concerned with mastering the specific requirements and conditions of a job. These requirements and conditions reflect the character of the company and the know-how which the company believes has led to its success. Whether the specific content behavior relates to dress, to safety, to record-keeping, to relations with peers, or to production procedures, it is oriented to a particular establishment and is essentially independent of the worker. It is for this reason that such behavior is best learned from peers, supervisors, and trainers in the immediate job situation.

Schools cannot anticipate all the unique requirements and conditions of different establishments in the same technological field and hence cannot equip the trainee with specific content skills. At best they can reinforce adaptive skills in the individual so that he is prepared to meet those unique situations and can then draw on the functional skills which he has developed at school.

The culturally disadvantaged worker, at least in the beginning, is not about to go back to school to acquire functional skills. Hence, the job environment must substitute for the school if he is to acquire these skills. One approach that

has been successful is to provide functional skill training in reading and arithmetic within the plant in an ordinary room equipped to accommodate programmed learning and some variant of teaching machines, such as tape recorders. Professional teachers are not needed; high school graduates have been satisfactorily used for this purpose.[17]

Increased skill in handling tools and machines, whether involving manipulation and adjustment of controls or maintenance and repair of equipment, requires both knowledge and practice. Practically all plants have extensive experience in setting up both types of training in an in-plant environment. The knowledge aspect is usually handled by regular company trainers; the practice, by leadmen and supervisors. The amount and kind of practice assigned the worker is determined according to his performance in class and his lower level functional performance on the job.

Acquiring functional skills requires not only supervised practice but also progressive exercise of one's abilities by undertaking increasingly difficult tasks. Clearly the average job is too specific in expected output — too structured — to serve as a learning situation for functional skills. Perceptive supervisors deal with this situation where the circumstances warrant such flexibility by enlarging a job either through prescription and/or discretion or by lateral transfer of the worker to broaden his experience. Such perception and flexibility on the part of supervisors is even more expedient in working with the culturally disadvantaged because their adaptive skills are likely to be deficient.

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The Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co., participating in the Washington Concentrated Employment Program, hired 28 WCEP recruits, 13 on February 5, and 15 three weeks later. At this point, all the women are still on the job and only one has any kind of absentee record.

> All this didn't happen by accident. C & P laid very careful groundwork. From the start, a company staff member worked with WCEP. The trainees, while still at WCEP, were brought down for a tour of the company. After they began work, C & P bolstered their work orientation with another week of prework preparation. Their supervisors were rehearsed. A successful Negro woman employee was brought in to talk to the women. — *The Washington Evening Star,* March 26, 1968.

Concerning the training of the hard-core unemployed, "New training techniques are often needed. **Emerson Electric,** for example, uses closed-circuit TV to show clerical trainees their job operations in slow motion. **Hoffman-**

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[17]Greenleigh Associates, Inc., *Field Test and Evaluation of Selected Adult Basic Education Systems* (New York: September 1966), pp. 93-96.

La Roche also uses audiovisual aids to train clerks in its Newark office." — *Factory,* February 1968.

Charles Rutledge, assistant to the president at **Lockheed**, says of their training program, "We overtrain so the worker will be able to perform all his duties and get an immediate feeling of success." — *Factory,* February 1968.

> A skills training program with an unusual aspect has been successfully completed by **International Business Machines'** Space Systems Center. . . . The unusual aspect initiated (and still continuing in other training classes) was that all candidates were placed on the regular payroll *before* they completed a day's training. They were permanent employees, eligible for all company benefit programs, including vacation credit. . . . Students who did not complete the program satisfactorily would be considered for other permanent employment if the skills they possessed at the time they left the program matched available job openings. — *Training and Development Journal,* December 1967.

Under the **Chrysler** mechanics program, a three-year apprenticeship plan which got started in May of 1965,

> The trainees were hired by Chrysler dealers and worked a regular 40-hour week at the apprentice rate. Two nights a week during the first year, they received formal instruction in auto repair, usually at nearby trade schools. . . . About 2000 students have been trained in the past 2½ years "and at least 500 are working in our dealerships right now," [according to George J. Cutler, manager of product service]. — *The Washington Post,* December 24, 1967.

In New York the **Chase Manhattan Bank** graduated 17 ghetto youths, mostly high school dropouts, from a recent six-week training course in reading, language skills, and mathematics. Now they will start work as keypunch operators and clerks, at $75 a week. — *The Christian Science Monitor,* July 1, 1968.

At **Consolidated Edison Co.,** New York, high school students identified as potential dropouts are hired part time — on the condition that they stay in school and maintain passing grades. — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 14, 1968.

General Electric Co. has bought a former warehouse in a Cleveland Negro district. This fall it will open as a work-study program center to train dropouts for jobs, offering basic remedial education and paid part-time jobs with the company. Other Cleveland companies will use the center too. — *The Wall Street Journal,* June 14, 1968.

Guideline 10. Keep Counseling in the Background.

The hard-core unemployed have been counseled to death; they've had it. When counseling has worked, it has been embedded in a job situation. What is indicated, therefore, is to have counseling services available if needed — after the disadvantaged worker is on the job and receiving an income.

In some manpower development and training programs, the participants were trained for jobs which were supposed to be awaiting them, but which often did not materialize. And so instead of getting jobs, these people were given counseling. It is obvious how under such circumstances the disadvantaged have come to regard counseling with suspicion if not downright resentment. Evaluative research into many of these training programs provides ample support for the notion that if you are going to use any counseling, let it be unobtrusively embedded in the job situation.[18]

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> Twenty-five New York area companies have joined in setting up the Social Research Corporation, which will select, train, and place 800 unemployed persons in its member companies. . . . For those applicants who need it, the organization will . . . provide two weeks of "pre-vocational" training, including such things as proper dress and behavior on the job. A counseling service will be available for those placed for up to a year. — *The New York Times,* August 13, 1968.

Guideline 11. Contract Out; Don't Try To Do It All Yourself.

Private commercial companies have entered the field of training culturally disadvantaged workers. Their adequacy can be judged by the fact that they are carving out a profitable market for themselves by producing results. What distinguishes them are three things: (1) they use modern technology — both hardware and software, (2) they staff to get the job done, which means that they do not depend on certified teachers, and (3) they teach in the job environment, not in school.

MIND, Inc., for example, teaches arithmetic, spelling, vocabulary, and word skills on the basis of programmed lessons recorded on cassettes played by the students on individual portable tape recorders. The monitors (not teachers) are college dropouts, former secretaries, waitresses, airline stewardesses, etc.,

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[18]See footnote 8, p. 169. "One could almost say, the more the program depended on counseling, the poorer it was, or, the less the counseling stood as an activity in its own right, the better was the counseling." See also Edward Gross, "Counselors Under Fire: Youth Opportunity Centers," *The Personnel and Guidance Journal,* Vol. 47, No. 5 (January 1969), pp. 404-409, for an excellent analysis of false assumptions made in counseling the disadvantaged.

or merely high school graduates in some cases just one step ahead of the students. Their fundamental role is to provide support and continuity. (In one operation, a monitor with a teaching background who started to use her professional training quickly switched to the more informal approach of the monitors.) In effect, the students teach themselves at their own pace — without grades, without pressure, and without anxiety.

The results are impressive. MIND's basic education courses, in 160 hours of instruction, are designed to raise a trainee's math and literacy skills by three to five grade levels. The tenth grade level is often achieved; in some instances even better results are obtained. As a result of such training in basic education, students have raised their IQ's as much as 10 points. Recently MIND, Inc., has added typing courses designed to train beginners to type 45 to 60 words a minute after 14 hours of instruction.

MIND's basic course varies in length and cost, depending on the needs of the students, the base from which they start, and the achievement level aimed for. Text materials are of a workbook nature and so are not reusable; but there are cassettes which may be used again and again on tape recorders. Hence the more students that are involved, the lower the cost per student.

Another company in the field, United States Research and Development, concurs that only a total approach such as the one described in these guidelines actually works with the culturally disadvantaged. The company says that its training can be accomplished only within a climate of human resources development. A third company, Responsive Environments Corporation, makes use of the "Talking Typewriter." The "Talking Typewriter" is a computer-based, multisensory, multimedia learning environment which directly involves the student's sight, hearing, and touch, and which is especially adapted to the teaching of reading. In a number of studies the company has found that not only do the students acquire basic functional skills, but also, indirectly, their adaptive skills are much improved. Larger companies such as General Learning Corporation, IBM, and Westinghouse Electric are also developing approaches to these problems.

That there is more to training the culturally disadvantaged than equipping them with specific basic functional skills is also evident in the fact that MIND, Inc., has recently undertaken to develop two additional types of training. One is "environmental and interpersonal skills" training (possibly the same as adaptive skills mentioned earlier), which includes impulse control, how to open a checking account and balance bank statements, how to shop, how to get around town, how to get along with supervisors, etc. For this purpose, video tapes are used on which dramatic situations, such as supervisors displaying insensitive behavior toward ethnic minorities, are portrayed. Subsequently these situations

and the trainees' reactions undergo roundtable discussion, the object being to develop attitudes that generate effective coping behavior in the trainees.

Another type of training is directed at supervisory personnel for the purpose of improving their communication skills with the hard-core unemployed. Again video and audio tapes are used for demonstration, followed by active involvement in developing and practicing the new skills. With such training, "managers gain as much insight into their own 'blindspots' in interpersonal relationships as they do in what 'bugs' the unemployables now employed by their company. And they learn to understand and *solve* 'people problems' rather than simply *control* people."[19]

For recruiting purposes, outside groups such as the Urban League and the NAACP can be used. Although the branches of such organizations vary in their adequacy, as is to be expected, they are proving helpful in many cities.

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> To reach across the barriers of suspicion, companies can call on dozens of job-development groups in the Negro-employment field. The Urban League, for one, has had long experience. . . . Other sources of help are community-wide groups that seek to reconcile disparate civic and racial organizations, moderate and militant alike, and to bring the jobless into contact with jobs. [Such groups include the Opportunities Industrialization Centers, Cleveland's AIM-JOBS, St. Louis' Work Opportunities Unlimited, and Los Angeles' Management Council.] — *Factory,* February 1968.

> **[Kodak]** now limits instruction by Kodak personnel to on-the-job programs and brings in outside experts — the Board for Fundamental Education of Indianapolis — to teach reading, writing, and numbers. The unskilled are put in a job class, and if they need it, in a BFE class.— *Factory,* February 1968.

MIND, Inc., whose name is derived from the words "methods for intellectual development," is a private company — a profit-making organization — which sells to industry programs designed to teach basic education and particular skills quickly and efficiently to adults. It originally began as a research and development project of the National Association of Manufacturers. Charles F. Adams, the president and originator of MIND, says, "We're trying to answer the question: How do you assimilate the unassimilatables into the labor market?" Many of the companies that purchased the MIND program and many employees who have taken the courses are well satisfied with the results. — *The New York Times,* January 21, 1968.

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[19]Charles F. Adams, president of MIND, Inc., in a talk before the National Laboratory for the Advancement of Education at the Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C., November 19, 1968.

Mobility

Guideline 12. Advance the Worker As Soon As Feasible.

Mobility doesn't necessarily mean that the worker has to be moved up a ladder. It is preferable to think of mobility in terms of a lattice with systematic opportunities for the individual worker to move to jobs that suit him and the company mutually. The initial advancement may take place within the framework of the entry job in the form of added responsibility or a salary increment or both. Or he can be told that his work is now ready to be judged according to normal supervisory standards, with a consequent raise in pay. Thus, he is encouraged to feel that he can carry the job by himself, that his production can meet the quality control standards of the company. After six months, he might even be able to function in a coaching role — to do for some new people coming in what was done for him. Who would better know how to coach newcomers than someone who has been helped and is now making it? This function could also entitle the coach to a small pay raise. This is mobility with a career aspect. Later on, once the worker has received additional training, he can, if he wishes, start planning a career in a more extensive sense.

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John Lewis, a Negro, is director of opportunity development for the **McCrory-McClellan-Green Stores.** On the question of business providing jobs for minority unemployed people, Mr. Lewis . . . said, "There must be a strong and continuing articulation of policy so that it becomes crystal clear throughout the corporate structure that the intent is to hire and promote potentially qualified people to the exclusion of none." — *The New York Times,* February 11, 1968.

Commenting on Bell's program to hire the unemployed, Mr. Robert D. Lilley, president of **New Jersey Bell,** said:

> While those hired under the program will be expected to fulfill the requirements of the jobs, continued employment will not depend on the ability to move ahead. However, those who show by their performance and development that they can advance to better jobs will be given every opportunity to do so. — *The New York Times,* January 21, 1968.

> The mere existence of beginners' jobs is not enough. Trainees must also be able to see some chance to advance. Business, too, must count on an upgrading process. Unless trainees can advance, a **Kodak** executive points out, the bottom jobs will soon be clogged with unpromotable people. — *Factory,* February 1968.

Summary of Guidelines

In summary, here are the 12 guidelines for the employment of the culturally disadvantaged:

1. Make a total commitment.
2. Put the reins in high-level hands.
3. Organize a training program for company personnel.
4. Pinpoint entry jobs for the culturally disadvantaged.
5. Interview; don't test.
6. Place the applicant on the job for which he is interviewed.
7. Coach to teach and reinforce adaptive skills.
8. Distinguish between prescribed and discretionary job content.
9. Teach specific content skills on the job; teach functional skills off the job but in the job environment.
10. Keep counseling in the background.
11. Contract out; don't try to do it all yourself.
12. Advance the worker as soon as feasible.

The Payoff

The above 12 guidelines do not purport to deal with every problem that might be encountered; they do purport to cover most of the important elements of a total personnel program which could lead to success in the employment of the culturally disadvantaged. By success I mean providing the employer with effective manpower and providing the culturally disadvantaged with a handhold on the opportunity system in American life.

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The best way to disarm the riot-minded extremists is to provide jobs for the unemployed Negroes and whites in the slums who otherwise can be persuaded by the militants that resort to violence is desirable and necessary. — *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* October 9, 1967.

One man signed his name with an "X" when he applied for a job. **Chrysler Corp.** hired him — and found he was an outstanding worker. — *Los Angeles Times,* September 18, 1968.

Ford Motor Co. hired a man who was hung up over his prison record, his inability to pass employment tests, and his blackness. Within eight months, he was promoted twice. — *Los Angeles Times,* September 18, 1968.

The (car) industry has also found that hiring the hard core meant filling jobs that otherwise would go vacant. — *Los Angeles Times,* September 18, 1968.

Ford Motor Co., which opened two hiring centers in Detroit's ghetto last fall, says it has retained 60% of the first 5,700 hard-core workers it hired, a rate comparable to that with other hourly employees hired during the same period. "We made a conscious decision to take a bath on this," says John Denman, manager of Ford's urban affairs department. "In every category we were most pleasantly surprised." — *The Wall Street Journal,* August 12, 1968.

Auto officials acknowledge that they may have miscalculated the potential of chronically jobless workers. "Many of these guys merely have been underemployed," says Lawrence J. Washington, a **Ford** employee relations executive. Another industry man says, "Apparently if you're a Negro and unemployed, you're automatically considered hard-core." — *The Wall Street Journal,* August 12, 1968.

A fair number of the hard-core workers are ex-convicts. "This is my last shot and I can't afford to blow it," says Harold D. Howard, who had spent 26 of his 44 years in prison before he was hired as an assembler last February. Harold, whose past jobs included "digging holes," shoveling snow and loading boxcars, is grateful to his new supervisor. "I'll make this job kill me before I let this man down," he says.—*The Wall Street Journal,* August 12, 1968.

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There are other possible benefits. It has already been suggested that you might discover more effective methods of recruitment, particularly for certain segments of your work force. The coaching approach might well be applied to your total work force because its humanizing aspects may produce important returns for workers who have disabilities but whom you wish to retain. For example, "Chrysler Corporation recently hired a white alcoholic, 45 years old, who once had been with Studebaker. He has had three 'lost weekends' at Chrysler, each lasting a week, but the company is keeping him in the pre-employment training program. 'I've invested too much time in this guy to lose him,' says his counselor, who, ironically, is a Negro."[20]

Another benefit will be your greater, more meaningful involvement with the community. What is essentially proposed in these guidelines is that in-

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[20] *The Wall Street Journal,* August 12, 1968.

dustry be a key participant in human resources development. Such participation would mean a closer relationship to the schools, to their vocational programs, and to their industry advisory committees.[21] Your experience could well be a resource for showing them how they can do a more efficient job in training and education of the culturally disadvantaged. After all, it is these same schools that have been squeezing out the very people you are now attempting to employ.

I think that the attitudes and feelings toward your company on the part of all your employees will improve — but not at first. You'll have real problems at first. Remember, that's why it is recommended that someone on a vice-presidential level be in charge of the employment of the culturally disadvantaged. It will take powerful leverage to combat those problems. But eventually the process — the activity, the involvement — is going to affect your entire company, even your stockholders. Evidently profound changes are occurring in the United States in the climate in which employment of the culturally disadvantaged is taking place. "Just a few years ago, many companies had to risk irritating stockholders by involving themselves. A reliable poll now shows 65 percent of stockholders feel corporations should participate in the war on poverty. There is of course an element of self-interest about this. 'If we do not act,' said a Chase Manhattan Bank vice president to a business audience this month, 'we must realize that we will undercut the healthy social and economic environment that is so vital to the very existence of our corporation.' "[22]

And as a very personal payoff, perhaps you will feel a lot better about yourself because finally, once and for all, you won't be leading a schizophrenic life with regard to democracy and opportunity in America.

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[21]See Samuel M. Burt, *Industry and Vocational-Technical Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 520 pp.

[22]*The Christian Science Monitor,* November 26, 1968.

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